

ANTH 115: Introduction to Medical Anthropology

Professor Karen Nakamura

GSI: Valerie Black and Carolina Talavera

Lecture

Tues-Thurs, 12:40-1:30pm

Must use your Berkeley zoom account

Professor Nakamura's zoom office hours

Individual: 9-11a Wednesday <https://calendly.com/knakamura/office-hours>
(Links to an external site.)

knak@berkeley.edu (email responses can get buried, email again if no response after 48 hrs)

Valerie Black's zoom office hours

Group/Drop-in: Thurs 1:45-2:45

Individual: Thurs 2:45-3:45

vblack@berkeley.edu (will always respond, usually within 1-3 days)

Carolina Talavera's zoom office hours

Group/Drop-in: Tuesday 10-11am

Individual: Tuesday 11am-12pm

catalavera@berkeley.edu

Course description

The field of medical anthropology has long seen medicine as a site of encounter, at once both intimately lived and broadly scaled. The way this “encounter” has been understood has changed quite a bit from the field’s inception in the mid 20th century. Medical anthropology had its beginnings as a field geared towards helping medical practitioners and public health workers better understand and negotiate gaps between medical “knowledge” and cultural or even personal “beliefs.” Culture and cultural difference were important to understand, but they were often understood as an obstacle, or a source of resistance that had to be overcome (“why do

urban Sri Lankans refuse to boil their drinking water?”). Subsequent critical approaches, starting in the 1970s and 1980s, turned to economics and politics (rather than culture), and they attended to “social” or structural causes of disease and experiences of suffering. In the process, anthropologists (engaged with lines of critique in the world around us) argued that biomedicine itself is suffused with culture, politics, and power. The effects of global epidemics (eg HIV/AIDS), the rise of pharmaceuticalization, and transformations in public health in the name of “global health” have further transformed the political, economic, and experiential topographies of health, illness, and intervention. This course offers an intensive introduction to medical anthropology through these shifts in problems and approaches, with additional foci on contemporary questions of addiction, disability, metabolism, and care, in and beyond the U.S.

Communication

Please ensure that you are set up to receive notifications via the bCourses site for this class. bCourses will be the primary way we communicate with you outside of class and section, and it is also where any additions or changes to the readings will be announced and posted.

Zoom Etiquette

For the lecture, we expect you to be actively listening, taking notes, and ready to engage in any group events, polls, quizzes, and breakout rooms. Missed quizzes cannot be retaken. You should not be driving or engaging in any other behavior where you cannot (safely) stop to engage with the class. That said, you are not expected to turn on your video unless there is a group or other activity that requires it.

However, the professor does ask that you set your ‘video mute’ avatar to either your face or any avatar of your choice. Be aware that zoom shares these settings across classes.

Readings

Course reader: Readings will be posted to bCourses. Some will require you to login to the UC Berkeley Library website to download and may require you to use the proxy or VPN to access. See the library website (<https://www.lib.berkeley.edu/using-the-libraries/proxy-server>Links to an external site.) for help. Readings listed under: “For further reading” are optional.

Books: There are no required texts for this course.

Course requirements

This is a concept-driven course that demands close readings, preparation, and active participation in class discussion. Please come to zoom lecture having read the assignments listed for that day on the syllabus. Your attendance and participation in all class meetings is expected.

Your final grade will be based on the following:

Midterm exams (3 total, all take-home)	45%
In-lecture quizzes and polls	10%
Reading responses – see the Guide from your GSI for details	45%
Extra credit study groups – see the Guide from your GSI for details (capped)	0-10%
Total	100%

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

This class is designed to be both challenging and intentionally accessible. Students are encouraged to go to the DSP early on and ask for an accommodation letter, which we will of

course honor. Even if you don't have a letter from the DSP, if you need a reasonable (or even unreasonable) accommodation, please let us know and we'll try make it happen. This goes triply for folks with non-visible disabilities or who pass or mask or compensate. No need to do that here.

Statement on Academic Integrity

We affirm the Berkeley Center for Teaching and Learning's principles of integrity: as a member of the campus community, you are "expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors. Any test, paper or report submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor. In all of your assignments, you may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, web sites, or other sources, but only with proper attribution."

Course schedule

Module I: Basic Concepts in Medical Anthro: Health, Illness, Sex/Race

Week 1.0: Tuesday Jan 19

Topics: What is anthropology? What is medical anthropology? How do we understand concepts such as "health" or "illness"? What is a "culture-bound syndrome" and why is that problematic?

Meta: How do you take notes during zoom lectures?

Thursday

Topics: Who is worthy of living? Who deserves to be neglected and/or die? What is a "sanitary citizen?"

In-depth: Medical anthropologist Dr. Charles Briggs

Meta and group: How to read academic articles

Reading (read before zoom lecture on Thursday):

BriggsC2002-Stories In The Time Of Cholera Race And Public Health In Venezuela.pdf

(in the bcourses reading folder)

Azande Witchcraft

Tell me why my children died

HIV/AIDS

Week 2.0 Tues Jan 26

Topics: OK, yeah, I get you, but sex (as in boy/girl) is real right? What? There are five sexes and that might not be enough?

Reading: FaustoSterlingA1995-5sexes.pdf

Thursday

Topics: Prof Nakamura's work in Okinawa and Facial Feminization Surgery

Reading: PlemonsE2018-GenderEthnicityTransgenderEmbodiment.pdf

Week 3.0 Tues Feb 2

Topics: Don't tell me you're going to do that deconstruction thing on race? Isn't race biological? Race seems really obvious ... so you're telling me 43andme is lying? But what about drugs targeted towards specific races? Or genetic diseases are found in some communities?

Reading: MarksJ1996-ScienceAndRace.pdf

Thursday Feb 4

Topics: Race the Power of an Illusion

Reading: AAA Statement on Race:

<https://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583> (Links to an external site.)

Week 4.0 Tue Feb 9

Topics: Illusions have power.

Reading: Nelson, Alondra Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination. Preface (pp. ix- xvi) and Chapters 2 and 3 (pp. 49- 114). R

<http://oskicat.berkeley.edu/record=b20558271~S1>Links to an external site.

Race: The Power of Illusion : The Difference Between Us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXEV0tqox9k> (Links to an external site.)

Thursday

Topics: Can you make someone diabetic?

Reading: Michael Montoya – Bioethnic Conscription.pdf

Take home-midterm 1 – Weeks 1-4

Module II: Narratives, Madness, and Power

Week 5.0 Tue Feb 16

Topics: Illness Narratives and Structural Competency

Reading: MetzIHansen2013-StructuralCompetency.pdf

Thursday

Topic: Carolina Talavera doctoral research

Reading: None

Week 6.0 Tue Feb 23

Topic: Ireland: Who gets to be a saint, scholar, or schizophrenic?

Reading: ScheperHughes-Saints scholars and schizophrenics madness and badness in western Ireland.pdf

Thursday

Topics: USA: Protest Psychosis – Schizophrenia and the Black Community

Reading:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/side-effects/201005/how-schizophrenia-became-black-disease-interview-jonathan-metzl> (Links to an external site.)

Week 7.0 Tue Mar 2

Topic: Comparative Perspectives Luhrmann: Who hears what voices?

Reading:

Luhrmann-differences-in-voice-hearing-experiences-of-people-with-psychosis-in-the-usa-india-and-ghana-interview-based-study.pdf

Thursday

Topic: Japan – What would an intentional community for schizophrenia look like?

Reading: Watch Bethel film at <http://www.disability.jp/soul/films/> (Links to an external site.)

password is: IOwnADisabilityOfTheSoul

Week 8.0 Tue Mar 9

Topic: Suicide and Colonialism amongst the Inuit

Reading: StevensonL2012-Inuit.pdf

Thursday

Topic: Valerie Black doctoral research presentation

Reading: None! You're free!

Week 9.0 Tue Mar 16 – NO CLASS MEETING, QUIET READING INSTEAD

Topic: Read 2-3 chapters of Disability of the Soul by Karen Nakamura. Any that you like but recommend at least the intro, then some of the stories.

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cat04202a&AN=ucb.b24872242&site=eds-live&authtype=ip,guest&custid=s1226370&groupid=main&profile=eds> (Links to an external site.)

Thursday – NO CLASS MEETING, QUIET READING INSTEAD

Topic: Read some more chapters, preferably including the conclusion of Disability of the Soul by Karen Nakamura.

SPRING BREAK

Week 10.0 Tue March 30

Topics: Brain Death in Japan and the United States

Reading: LockM-maq.1996.10.4.02a00110.pdf

Thursday

Topics: The global trade in organs

Reading: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1466138104041588> (Links to an external site.)

Midterm Exam Module II (weeks 5-10)

Module III – Deaf Culture, Autism, and Beyond

Week 11.0 April 6

Topic: Everyone Spoke Sign Language?

Reading: Nora Groce

Thursday

Topic: Japanese Deaf Community – Deaf in Japan Chapter I

Reading: Karen Nakamura

Week 12.0 April 13

Topic: Cochlear Implants

Film: Sound and Fury (in-class)

Thursday

Topic: Controversies over cochlear implants

Reading: Laura Mauldin – Precarious Plasticity

Week 13.0 April 20

Topic: The Epidemic of Autism?!

Reading: TBA

Topic: Rethinking autistic perspectives

Reading: TBA

Week 14.0 April 27

Tuesday: Metrics: who and what counts in Global Health?

Adams, Vincanne. 2016. Metrics: What Counts in Global Health. Durham: Duke University Press. Introduction (pp. 1-19) (R), and additional excerpts, bCourses.

Thursday: Last day wrap-up

Module III Final Mid-term Takehome